

## Some Commonly Used Planning Terms and Definitions

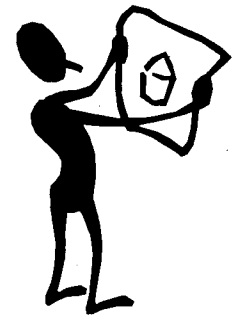


- ❑ **Affordable Housing:** For sale or rental housing that is affordable to very low income and low-income families. The generally accepted definition of affordability is for a household to pay no more than 30 percent of its annual income on housing. Families who pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing are considered cost burdened and may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation and medical care. (Definition from the Department of Housing and Urban Development)
- ❑ **Allocation, Traffic:** The assigned number of trips to a property, which translates into development potential.
- ❑ **Amenities:** An amenity is something that contributes to physical or material comfort. An amenity increases the attractiveness or value of a piece of real estate or a geographic location.
- ❑ **Area Development Policy:** An Area Development Policy establishes special traffic level of service standards for a specific geographic area.
- ❑ **Arterial (Minor/Major Street):** Arterials accommodate major movement of traffic. The Arterial street is designed mainly for the movement of through traffic, which may include light rail transit, but also normally performs a secondary function of providing access to abutting properties.
- ❑ **Buildable Area:** The area of a lot exclusive of the required setback and open space areas. This area should actually be buildable.
- ❑ **Building Envelope:** The space, defined by the setbacks, height limits, and limits on the percentage of a site that may be covered by buildings and other structures. Together these establish an "envelope" within which a building must fit.
- ❑ **Campus Industrial:** This land use designation provides for a somewhat more intensive development and broader range of uses than the Research and Development category but with a unique campus design concept, which takes advantage of the site's natural features and incorporates substantial amounts of landscaped and natural open space.
- ❑ **CEQA:** The California Environmental Quality Act. This environmental law requires state, local, and other agencies in California to evaluate the environmental implications of their proposed actions. CEQA aims to prevent negative environmental effects of proposed agency actions by requiring agencies to avoid or reduce, when feasible, the significant negative environmental impacts of their decisions. See Environmental Impact Report and Mitigated Negative Declaration.
- ❑ **Collector Streets:** Collectors serve internal traffic movements within an area and connect this area with the major arterial system. This facility does not handle long through trips but does provide access to abutting properties.
- ❑ **Corridor:** A corridor is a major road that connects many districts across a region; a linear area.

- ❑ **Density:** The number of families, individuals, dwelling units, households, or housing structures per unit of land. In San Jose, the measure of density for residentially designated land is dwelling units per net acre (DU/AC).
- ❑ **Development Standards:** The criteria (such as setback, height, minimum lot size, dimension and parking ratio) that establish how a site may be developed.
- ❑ **Districts:** A district is an identifiable portion of a city that has understandable boundaries and a particular concentration of uses.
- ❑ **Environmental Impact Report (EIR):** A detailed information document that describes and analyzes a project's significant environmental effects and discusses ways to mitigate or avoid those effects.
- ❑ **Edges:** Edges are the linear elements that form a boundary between two areas or regions.
- ❑ **Exaction:** Contribution or payment required as an approved condition of receiving a development permit.
- ❑ **Floor Area Ratio:** The measurement of development intensity on a parcel is calculated by floor area ratio (FAR), which is the gross floor area of all floors of all buildings or structures on a lot divided by the total lot area. For example, the maximum floor area for a FAR of 0.2 on a one-acre site is an 8,712 square foot building. [FAR = Total Building Floor Area divided by Total Lot Area]
- ❑ **General Development Plan (GDP):** A graphic and textual plan showing general land use, development standards, performance standards, other special use restrictions, circulation, open space, utilities, storm water management, environmental mitigation requirements, community facilities, and/or phasing for a parcel of land proposed to be developed under the Planned Development Zoning process. The GDP becomes the "zoning district" for that parcel.
- ❑ **General Plan:** Also known as a master or comprehensive plan; sometimes referred to as the "blueprint" for future development. This is a comprehensive, long-range plan intended to guide the growth and development of a city, county or region. There are seven elements or components in the Plan, which are required by state law.
- ❑ **High Density Residential (HDR) 25-50 Dwelling Units per Acre:** This density is typified by three-to four-story apartments or condominiums over parking. This density is planned primarily near the Downtown Core Area, near commercial centers with ready access to freeways and/or expressways and in the vicinity of the rail stations within the Transit-Oriented Development Corridors Special Strategy Area.
- ❑ **Highway/Roadway Capacity or Carrying Capacity:** The number of vehicles that can be accommodated on a highway or roadway.
- ❑ **Infill Development:** Development or reuse of land within an area already largely developed.
- ❑ **Intensity:** The degree to which land is used; generally refers to the relative scale and mass of structures and/or to levels of activity or uses. See Density and Floor Area Ratio.

- ❑ **Land Use:** The determination of the use to which a property may be put, e.g. residential, industrial, commercial, open space, etc.
- ❑ **Legal Nonconforming Structure:** A structure or building which does not conform to present requirements of the zoning district in which it is located but is nonetheless legal because its size, dimensions, or location were lawful prior to the adoption of or revision or amendment to the zoning ordinance. Legal nonconforming structures are commonly said to be "grandfathered."
- ❑ **Legal Nonconforming Use:** A use or activity which does not conform to present requirements of the zoning district in which it is located but is nonetheless legal because the use or activity was lawful prior to the adoption of or revision or amendment of the zoning ordinance. Legal nonconforming uses are commonly said to be "grandfathered."
- ❑ **Local or Minor Streets:** Streets not shown on the General Plan Land Use/Transportation Diagram, whose primary intended purpose is to provide access to fronting properties.
- ❑ **Low Density Residential (LDR) 5 Dwelling Units per Acre:** This density is typified by 8,000 square foot lots.
- ❑ **Major Streets:** The transportation network, which includes highways, freeways, major arterials and collectors to service through traffic.
- ❑ **Mass:** The height, width, and depth of a structure; its bulk.
- ❑ **Medium Density Residential (MDR) 8-16 Dwelling Units per Acre:** This density is typified by patio homes, townhouses and duplexes. It also allows a mixture of single-family and apartment units.
- ❑ **Medium High Density Residential (MHDR) 12-25 Dwelling Units per Acre:** This density is typified by two-story apartments and condominiums with surface parking. Greater heights are possible. Medium High density residential uses are planned primarily for locations on major streets and near major activity centers.
- ❑ **Medium Low Density Residential (MLDR) 8 Dwelling Units per Acre:** This density is typified by the 6,000 square foot subdivision lot that is prevalent in San Jose. Single-family detached homes, smaller-lot detached patio homes, and single-family attached residences are appropriate in this category.
- ❑ **Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND):** A CEQA document prepared when a project would have significant environmental effects as originally proposed, but the developer can and will eliminate those effects by changing the project or adopting mitigation measures, meaning that certain steps must be taken but no further environmental review is necessary.
- ❑ **Mitigation:** The methods used to alleviate or reduce the negative impacts of development.

- ❑ **Mixed Use:** Properties on which various uses are combined in a single building or on a single site in an integrated development project. Mixed-use can include office, commercial, institutional, and residential.
- ❑ **Multi-family Attached Dwelling Units:** Multi-family attached dwellings are units that are not separated by a ground-to-roof wall. Examples of multi-family attached dwelling units include high-rise, garden, and town house apartments, which may be constructed for sale as condominiums or cooperatives, or for rental as apartments.
- ❑ **Nodes:** Nodes are points or strategic spots in a District that help define the character or identity of the District.
- ❑ **Non-Urban Hillside:** The land use designation is proposed for most hillside areas above the fifteen percent slop line. Because of the pervasive geologic conditions in the hills and the extraordinary public costs of hillside development, uses are limited those having very little physical impact on the land and requiring no urban facilities or services.
- ❑ **Paseo:** An improved walkway set aside for pedestrian traffic.
- ❑ **Paths:** Paths are streets, walkways, transit lines, and railroads; these elements move people along from one point to another.
- ❑ **Peak Hour/Peak Period:** The period of the day during which a highway/roadway carries its highest volume of traffic. Usually, this occurs during the morning and/or evening commute hours.
- ❑ **Performance Standards:** A set of criteria or limits for certain characteristics of a particular use or process. Standards generally cover noise, vibration, traffic, etc. These standards are frequently part of the GDP for planned development zonings and certain of them are included in the conventional zoning districts (see Zoning, Conventional and Zoning, Planned Development).
- ❑ **Permit:** A permit implements the zoning of a property, typically addressing site and architectural issues.
- ❑ **Place:** An environment that has been created within an existing node or district, which has unique characteristics that are easily identified or recognized by the observer.
- ❑ **Plan Set:** A plan set is comprised of the graphic and textual information required to show how a proposed development will use a site. The plan set includes a site plan, a grading and drainage plan, building elevations, floor plans, a landscape plan, and a details sheet.
- ❑ **Private Recreation:** This land use designation allows for uses such as country clubs, golf courses, tennis clubs, driving ranges, recreational vehicle parks and private campgrounds.
- ❑ **Public/Quasi-Public:** (1) Privately owned and operated activities which are institutional in nature, such as hospitals, museums and schools; (2) churches and other religious institutions; (3) other non-profit activities of an educational, youth, welfare or philanthropic nature which cannot be considered a residential, commercial or industrial activity; and (4) public utilities and the facilities of any organization involved in the provision of public services such as gas, water, electricity, and telecommunications.



- ❑ **Riparian Corridor:** A general term for lands running parallel to and along a creek, constituting the ecosystem and potentially sensitive habitat for its animal and plant life.
- ❑ **Setback:** The distance between the building or other structure and a particular lot line. The zoning ordinance establishes minimum setbacks for conventional zoning districts, and identifies setback exceptions, if any. Setbacks for PD Zonings are based on City design guideline requirements and other factors.
- ❑ **Single-family Attached Dwelling Units:** Single-family attached dwellings are units such as duplexes, town houses or row houses where each housing unit is separated by a ground-to-roof wall and where no housing units are constructed above or below each other.
- ❑ **Site Plan:** The site plan is a scale drawing which shows the uses, structures, traffic and pedestrian circulation facilities, open space, landscaping, etc. arranged on the project site with their proposed dimensions and relative locations. Other features shown on the site plan, as appropriate, include drainage systems, utilities, significant vegetation and trees, landscape areas, easements, topography, surrounding development, and any other physical elements required to describe how the proposed development will fit on the site.
- ❑ **Smart Growth:** A growing movement to integrate sound planning principles into policies and practices for building walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods in existing urban centers and towns to counter urban decay and sprawl. Supporters of this movement are promoting new ways to design and develop distinctive, attractive, safe, and pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods for building and maintaining sustainable communities and regions. Principles include incorporating mixed-uses, providing housing opportunities and choices, creating a sense of place, providing a variety of transportation choices, preserving open spaces and critical environmental areas, and encouraging community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions. Also known as sustainable development, compact development, new urbanism, and neo-traditional planning.
- ❑ **The Greenline/Urban Growth Boundary:** The Greenline/Urban Growth Boundary defines the ultimate perimeter of urbanization in San Jose.
- ❑ **Traffic Impact Analysis:** A Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) is a study prepared for the purpose of identifying the effect of traffic generated by specific development projects on the surrounding roadway network. The conclusion from the study is the basis for determining the project's impact and necessary mitigation measures.
- ❑ **Transit Corridor Residential: 20+ Dwelling Units per Acre:** This land use designation is intended for medium high and high density residential uses within, or very near, Transit-Oriented Development Corridors and BART Station Area Nodes, Housing Initiative Area, or major bus routes.
- ❑ **Transit Oriented Development Corridors:** Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Corridors are areas designated by the City as generally suitable for higher residential densities, for more intensive non-residential uses, and for mixed uses; these areas are centered along existing or planned light rail transit (LRT) lines and/or major bus routes and at future Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) stations.
- ❑ **Transportation Demand Management:** Transportation Demand Management (TDM) refers to the set of activities aimed at increasing the efficiency of existing roadway systems by reducing the demand for travel by single-occupancy vehicles during the peak period. These techniques include carpooling or vanpooling, flexible work hours, telecommuting, parking control, and use of alternative transportation modes such as transit.

- ❑ **Transportation Level of Service:** A description of traffic conditions along a given roadway or at a particular intersection. LOS ranges from "A" (free flow of traffic with minimum intersection delay) to "F" (forced flow, jammed intersections, and long delays). LOS reflects factors such as speed, travel time, freedom to maneuver, traffic interruptions, and delay.
- ❑ **Trip Distribution:** The geographic distribution of the vehicular trips generated by a project.
- ❑ **Trip Generation:** Project generated traffic, based on land use.
- ❑ **Urban Service Area:** The area where services and facilities provided by the City and other public agencies are generally available, and where urban development requiring such services should be located.
- ❑ **Use Table:** A table of allowed uses included on the development plans or zoning district that identifies the purpose or activity for which land or buildings are designed, arranged, or intended or for which they are occupied or maintained.
- ❑ **Viewshed:** The area within view from a defined observation point.
- ❑ **Watershed:** The total area above a given point on a waterway that contributes water to its flow; the entire region drained by a waterway or watercourse, which drains into a lake, reservoir, or stream.
- ❑ **Zoning Ordinance:** A municipally adopted law that delineates zoning districts and establishes regulations governing the use, placement, spacing, size of land and buildings, and a list of allowable uses within each district. A zoning ordinance must serve to protect the public health, safety, and welfare. Zoning districts should conform to the General Plan land use designation; however, this is not always the case in San Jose.
- ❑ **Zoning, Conventional:** Conventional zoning districts are those identified in the Zoning Ordinance, Table 20-270, which generally correspond to respective General Plan land use designations. Conventional zoning districts include a range of land uses, development intensities and development standards within the major land use categories: residential, commercial and industrial, agriculture and open space.
- ❑ **Zoning, Planned Development:** Planned Development (PD) zoning districts provide the means to tailor regulations to a particular site. However, every project must still satisfy the development policies set forth in the General Plan and the design guidelines adopted by the City Council. The PD Zoning process allows the Council to consider the unique characteristics of a development site and its surroundings to better implement the objectives, goals and policies of the General Plan.